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L E T T E R S,  
O N T H E  
WORSHIP OF CHRIST,

ADDRESSED TO THE

REV. GEORGE HORNE, D.D.

President of ST. MARY MAGDALEN College, OXFORD,  
and Chaplain in Ordinary to his MAJESTY.

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By T H E O S E B E S.

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ΕΥ ΔΕ ΛΑΛΕΙ Α ΠΡΕΠΕΙ ΤΗ ΥΠΙΑΝΟΥΣΗ ΔΙΔΑΣΚΑΛΙΑ.  
PAUL.

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L O N D O N,

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M D C C L X X V I.

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LETTER

TO THE

OF THE



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# LETTERS, &c.

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## LETTER I.

REV. SIR,

**I** SHOULD have paid my respects to you sooner, had it not happened, that your celebrated performance did not fall into my hands, 'till very lately.

I esteem it the undoubted right of every man to declare his sentiments, boldly, and in the most explicit manner, upon every doctrine of the Scriptures; and I rejoice at every publication, which has for its object, the discussion of some controverted religious duty. Knowledge is to the mind, as food is to the body, its life, and support, and the minister of its pleasures. But, a great encrease of knowledge ariseth from the open communication of our sentiments to one

another. We frequently learn knowledge even from one another's errors; or, hence have occasion given us, to acquire the more solid possession of truth. I thank you, therefore, for your discourse, entitled *Christ the object of religious adoration, and therefore very God*. But, I must, at the same time, express my concern, that you should have uttered any declarations, implying a belief, that none but those of your sentiments can belong to the church of Christ. *If we are guilty of idolatry, you say, p. 23, the whole church of Christ has been guilty of it, in the grossest manner, from the days of the apostles, to this present hour*. This appears to be nothing less than saying, that no man can be a Christian, unless he worship Jesus Christ, as very God. But, this should not be said, admitting your doctrine to be true, without the strongest scripture evidence. Much less should it be said, that it is owing to an *impious perverseness*, and *impious ingratitude*, or a *sullen silence*, that any refuse to adore Christ, as God, or to call upon him, by prayer. For, it is possible, to cherish and countenance very glaring errors, without any *impious*, or *perverse design*, indeed, *thro' mere weakness, or prejudice*.

But, I rejoice, to find you acknowledging, that "the question we *are* discussing, "is not of a trifling or indifferent nature. "It relates to the prime and leading arti-  
"cle

“ cle of all religion. It is not a point of  
 “ speculation merely ; our daily practice is  
 “ concerned in its determination, according  
 “ to which, we are led either to honour,  
 “ or dishonour our Redeemer.” And hence  
 I would hope, though you think your  
 doctrine as firmly founded as the everlasting  
 hills, that you are still resolved to enter into  
 a farther and more minute investigation of  
 it, that, as gold, which is seven times pu-  
 rified, the more it is tried, the more it may  
 daily strike you with its evidence and lustre.  
 With all the genius you possess, you are  
 certainly fallible, and may be mistaken. And  
 a mistake here, according to your own sen-  
 timents, is very momentous ; particularly,  
 if it be owing to indulged prejudices, to  
 wilful blindness, or to an over weening so-  
 licitude to confirm *established* doctrines.

You seem convinced, that, in your dis-  
 course *the evidence* for Athanasianism, *is*  
*drawn to a point*. And you profess, therefore,  
 that your view in delivering it, was to *strike*  
*the younger part of your audience with it* all at  
 once. But if this *evidence* amounts to no-  
 thing, your system must fall to the ground ;  
 and you should ask pardon of your auditors,  
 for authoritatively endeavouring so palpably  
 to mislead them. At any rate, you should  
 think it unbecoming a professor of science  
 to check a spirit of enquiry in young men,  
 who are expected to be led to the fountain



of rational principles, and to be trained up in manly sentiments\*. Truth loveth the light, and must appear more lovely and glorious, and obtain more universal dominion, from the amplest range that is given to the enquirers after it. But, how shall we be ever able to distinguish truth from falsehood, unless we be allowed to compare the one with the other? How unworthy is it then, of an avowed advocate for truth, to recommend it to his hearers, to embrace it blindfold, to rest satisfied with *the evidence* which, he pretends, he *has clearly stated to them*, or to *search and collect* the same kind of evidence only *more at large for themselves*. *Would any man, you farther say, persuade you to refuse divine worship to your Redeemer, that is, to Jesus Christ. Reject the attempt, whoever makes it, with a noble scorn.* How different your instructions from those of the apostle Paul, who has encouraged us, to *prove all things?*

I would also entreat you to consider, that different persons being found to represent a doctrine in the same light, and to vindicate it by the same arguments, is far from being an absolute proof of the truth of such doctrine. *This consideration, you say, p. 2, above*

\* Besides, so candid and discerning an audience as you had the honour to address, required no lecture upon the *danger of thinking*. *Minds benighted and ingenuous, like your's, you say, will find no difficulty in forming a right judgment upon the subject.* Why, then should you attempt to confine them within a dark circle?



## WORSHIP of CHRIST. 7

*all prevailed that the established doctrine concerning the worship of our Redeemer might receive no small degree of confirmation in the minds of its professors, where, without concert, or consultations, persons sitting down to reconsider it, at different times, and in different places, should be found to represent it in the same light, and to vindicate it by the same arguments. You did not reflect, it seems, that this reasoning, if it has any force in it, will equally favour Unitarians, Papists, Mahomedans, and every other religious sect under heaven. Transubstantiation, has been frequently represented in the same light, by many different persons. People professing the same doctrines, generally represent them in the same light. I believe, too, that this is as uniformly the case with Unitarians as with any other Christians. Besides, though different sects without previous concert or consultation are found to vindicate their several tenets, by the same arguments, this only shews that they draw their arguments from the same sources. Those, who are under the sacred influences of reason, will always be surrounded with light. Those, on the contrary, who have only the establishment of some particular system in view, will always walk in darkness. According to the foundation on which we build, our works shall be as gold, silver, or precious stones, or, as wood, hay, stubble.*

Hoping for your dispassionate reception  
of these remarks, and your candid atten-  
tion to what follows,

I am, at present,

Rev. Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

THEOSEBE.

LETTER

LETTER II.

REV. SIR,

YOU are undoubtedly too good a logician, not to acknowledge, that, if different passages of Scripture be contradictory one to the other, both cannot be true. But, it is the universal doctrine of Scripture, that there is only One God, One Living and True God, who is from Everlasting, and to Everlasting\*. And, in perfect harmony with the audible voice of nature, it is the first and great command of Scripture, *Thou shalt have no other Gods before me*: and this implies, as we are repeatedly taught, that *Thou shalt worship no other God*. We learn, again, that the One Only God, and supreme uncontrollable Sovereign of the Universe, is, *without any variableness or shadow of turning*. As believers in Scripture, therefore, we cannot admit that the One God was humbled, or exalted, was born, suffered death, or was raised from the dead. We cannot believe, therefore, that Jesus Christ is the One God. Instead, therefore, of reasoning thus, *If Jesus Christ be Jehovah, he must be the object of religious adoration; and if the object of religious adoration, he must be*

\* See this point considered more at large in the last letter.

Jehovah;



*Jehovah; you should rather have argued, since Jesus Christ is not Jehovah, he cannot be the object of religious adoration; and if religious adoration, therefore, be intended by "calling upon the name of the Lord," in my text, Jesus Christ cannot be that Lord, to whom religious adoration is required to be offered.*

Besides, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve*, is the language of Jesus himself. And he quoted this passage, out of the law, to shew that he himself, and all other beings should worship no other. He accordingly has directed his followers to the FATHER, as the only object of religious worship. *When thou prayest*, said he, *say, Our Father, who art in heaven*, and, he thus addressed himself to the woman of Samaria, *The time cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers, shall worship the Father*, that is, the Father only, *in spirit and in truth*. Nay, he expressly taught the disciples, that, after his departure from them, *they should ask him nothing*, but that, *whatever they should ask the Father in his name, he would give them*. If the apostles, therefore, either addressed themselves in religious adoration to Christ, or exhorted others to do so, they did this, without any warrant from Christ, indeed, in direct repugnancy to his commands. But the apostles, on the contrary, faithfully followed the directions of their Master, when they instructed others upon  
this



## WORSHIP of CHRIST. 11

this subject. Paul's doctrine is, that *we should give thanks unto the Father*. James says, *Ask of God, even the Father of lights, who giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not*. And Peter says, *Glorify God; commit the keeping of your souls unto him, as unto a faithful Creator; humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, casting all your care upon him*. It was likewise the apostles own practice, to pray to God, and not to Christ. *My heart's desire and prayer to God, says Paul, for Israel is, that they might be saved*. And, Peter praised God, and prayed to God, *Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the God of all Grace perfect you*. Hence, then, you should have concluded, without attending to many other passages to the same purpose, that whatever be the meaning of *calling upon the name of the Lord*, in the words of your text, *whosoever calleth upon the name of the Lord shall be saved*, no such doctrine can be intended here, as that we should worship Jesus Christ as God. However, Sir, it was surely incumbent on you, to have taken some little notice of the above passages, before you ventured to entitle your Sermon, *Christ the object of religious adoration, and therefore very God*. Or, passing over all these palpable evidences that lie against you, you should have been clear, that you had some shadow of proof of your darling doctrine, before you so confidently proclaimed it to the university of Oxford, and

and so precipitately obtruded it upon the world.

But, you deem it sufficient to be able to say, *you think your doctrine evidently implied in the text.* And to make others think with you, you suppose nothing farther to be necessary, than to take it for granted, that *Christ is the Lord* mentioned there, and then to conclude, associating yourself with Doctor Whitby, that *it applies to him, what by the prophet Joel was spoken of Jehovah, and, secondly, that it affirms him to be the object of religious adoration.* You, therefore, profess to *prove, first, that Christ is to be worshipped, and from thence infer his Divinity.* And, to this purpose, you say, *Invocation is a part, and a principal part of adoration; but, my text mentions the invocation of Christ as a duty, to the performance of which salvation is annexed. Whosoever, &c.*

Now, I am obliged to deny both your premises, and your conclusion. For, it is obvious, from what I have already observed, that, if the word *ἐπικαλεῖται*, which is rendered *shall call upon*, refers to an act of religious adoration, Paul, who believed there was only ONE GOD THE FATHER, must have intended, in the text, to point *him* out as the object of our homage, under the term *Lord*. Joel certainly thought of no other being, but the Eternal Jehovah, as the Saviour of men.

Peter,

## WORSHIP of CHRIST. 1

Peter, quoting the same passage, Acts 2, 21, means, likewise, the *One God*, by the terms, *the Lord*; as is evident from his so particularly distinguishing, in the next verse, *God himself*, from *the man approved of God*. *Who-so-ever*, says he, *shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved*. *Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you, by miracles, and wonders, and signs, which God did by him, in the midst of you. Him, being delivered, by the determinate counsel and fore-knowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands, have crucified and slain: whom God hath raised up, having loosed the pains of death. The apostle Paul also produces the text as a proof that the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him; which should seemingly shew, that he was speaking of calling upon the name of God. So far is it from being without doubt, that the context treats wholly of Christ, that the very contrary may, I think, be proved. And so far is the text from intimating, that the man, who desires to be saved must call upon Christ by prayer, that the context declares, if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus Christ, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. And hence, I am led to affirm that Dr. Whitby's double argument does not amount to a single one; for if invocation be what is implied in the*  
word



word *ἐπικαλεσθῆναι*; the being to be invoked is not *Jesus*, but *Jehovah*.

But, allowing that Christ is really the person mentioned in the text, you are as far from your point as ever. For the word *ἐπικαλεσθῆναι*, in the New Testament, does never necessarily signify, when followed by an accusative case, to *invoke* or *worship*, but always naturally, to *appeal to*, to *refer a cause to*, or to *submit to the jurisdiction or authority of another*\*. Origen's testimony to the contrary, however great a master he was of the Greek language, can determine nothing, unless his argument will universally hold good. But, if *ἐπικαλεσάμενος τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ χριστοῦ*, which is rendered *calling upon the name of Christ*, necessarily signifies that the apostle, by this phraseology, declares him to be God,

\* I would be understood, to except those passages, where the word signifies, *named*, or *surnamed*: though even these, will very well bear the same explication. As Acts 11, 13, *Σίμωνα τὸν ἐπικαλεσμένον Πέτρον*, *Simon, who was appealed, or referred to, as Peter*. 12, 25, *Ἰωάννην τὸν ἐπικληθέντα Μάρκον*, *John, whose surname was Mark, or John who was referred to as Mark*. And 15, 22, *Ἰούδαν τὸν ἐπικαλεσμένον Βαρσαβαν*, *Judas, surnamed Barsabas, or Judas, who was referred to as Barsabas*. Yet, you say, "*ἐπικαλεσθῆναι*," including the word itself, and all its derivatives, "when followed by an accusative case, always signifies, to *invoke*, or *worship*, except "only where it signifies to *appeal to*." If it never necessarily signifies any thing else but to *appeal to*, there was no room for your exception. If it never necessarily signifies to *invoke* or *worship*, there was no occasion for your observation at all. If it always will very well bear the same sense, why should we confound ourselves, by ascribing to it a variety of different senses!

whose



# WORSHIP of CHRIST. 15

whose name was called upon, then, certainly, *ἐπικαλουμεναι*, when followed with any other accusative, denoting any other person, will likewise declare that that other person is called God. We know, however, that *Καίσαρα ἐπικαλουμεναι*, are the words which the apostle useth, Acts 25, 11, when he says, what we render, *I appeal unto Cæsar*, that is, I refer my cause to him. The same word is used for *appealed*, in the next verse, where Festus says, *Hast thou appealed unto Cæsar?* And in the 21st verse, and in the 25th verse, *ἐπικαλεσάμενος τοῦ Σεβαστοῦ*, and in the 32d verse of the next chapter, and in the 19th verse of the 28th chapter \*. But, you can hardly venture to affirm, that the apostle meant to call upon *Nero*, the most execrable monster of the human race, as *his God*, or to pay him *religious homage*. Again, though the word *ἐπικαλεσθε*, 1 Pet. 1, 17, refers to the *Father* himself, it does not signify to *invoke*, or to *call upon by prayer*; but the natural sense of the passage, *If ye call on the Father*, is, *if ye appeal, or refer your cause to him, as your judge, submitting to his authority*. In the verses preceding and following your text, the words *ἐπικαλεσάμενος* and *ἐπικαλεσονται*, in the passages, *the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him*, and, *how then shall*

\*. Paul had *appealed*, *ἐπικαλεσάμενος*, to be reserved unto the hearing of Augustus. Acts 25, 21. He himself hath *appealed* *ἐπικαλεσάμενος*, to Augustus. Acts 25, 25. If he had not *appealed* *ἐπεκεκλητο* unto Cæsar. Acts 26, 32. I was constrained to *appeal* *ἐπικαλεσασθαι* unto Cæsar. Acts 28, 19.

they

they call on him on whom they have not believed, have exactly the same meaning. Thus, also we are to understand *ἐπικαλεμενον*, *ἐπικαλεμαι* and *ἐπικαλεμενων* in Acts 7, 59; 2 Cor. 1, 23; and 2 Tim. 2, 22, *calling upon God*. I call God for a record, or I appeal to God as a witness, and Them that call on the Lord. And, if this be the obvious meaning of *ἐπικαλεομαι*, with an accusative case, when the reference is to ALMIGHTY GOD, by what arguments can it be shewn to have a different, and a higher meaning, when the reference is to Jesus Christ? Or, rather, is it not impossible that this should be the case, unless some texts of Scripture can be produced, which expressly command the religious adoration of Jesus Christ!

It is not certain that the *Lord*, Acts 22, 16, signifies the *Lord Jesus*. However, allowing this, *submitting to the authority of the Lord*, is the plain meaning of *calling upon the name of the Lord*, in this place. Ananias did not think of teaching Paul, to invoke Jesus, as his God, but to embrace the Christian Religion. And, the sense that I have given of the passage, seems as clear as it is natural; *Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, submitting to the authority of the Lord*. In short, *calling upon Jesus* in the New Testament, universally signified, *referring our cause to him, or submitting to his authority*; namely, that authority, which he received

## WORSHIP of CHRIST. 17

received from the Father; and, that is, submitting to the authority of the Father himself, or, that authority which he communicated to Christ, and by him made manifest to the world. Thus we are to understand *all that call on thy name*, Acts 9, 14, *them who called on this name* 21, and, *all that in every place, call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord*, 1 Cor. 1, 2.

The following are the only remaining passages of the New Testament, where *ἐπικαλεσθαι*, or any of its derivatives, are used; and, in all these passages the word signifies *named*, or *surnamed*. Mat. 10, 3. Luke 22, 3. Acts 4, 36. 10, 5, 18, 32. 11, 13. 12, 12, 25. 15, 17, 22. Heb. 11, 16. and James 2, 7.\*

Upon what foundation, then, you have presumed to assert, that *Christ is the object of religious invocation*, and, that *the man who desires to be saved, must call upon Christ by prayer*; or, upon what foundation you have concluded, from Paul's addressing one of his epistles to *all that call upon the name of the Lord Jesus*, that *the first Christians were characterised by that very circumstance, that they invoked Christ*, I leave to your serious consideration. You will not, I hope, still confidently affirm, that *your argument stands*

\* See the preceding note.



good, and cannot admit of any farther reply, or evasion\*. You will not, I hope, for the future, condemn in such reprehensible terms, those who pray only, according to the directions of Christ, to *Our Father who is in heaven*.

Purposing to proceed to the discussion of your other arguments, in the following letter, I remain, at present,

Rev. Sir,

Your very humble Servant,

THEO SEBES.

\* I should be sorry to triumph over an opponent, by any *evasive* arguments, or artifices. *Evasion*, belongs as much, at least, to those, who style themselves *Orthodox*, as to those, whom they are pleased to stigmatize, as *Heterodox*. My wish is, to have it entirely banished out of the world, and to have every heart open to all the sacred impressions of reason and truth.

LETTER



LETTER III.

REV. SIR,

IT is not unusual with some persons, after they have, or imagined they have, proved one part of their argument, to dismiss all the objections of their opponents, with a triumphant adieu. But it is not my intention even to affect such a conduct. Yet I might fairly determine, that if the gospel be a consistent scheme, and if, as I presume, has been sufficiently shewn, the gospel expressly requires *religious worship* to be paid to the *Father only*, then all your other arguments, to demonstrate that *religious worship* is due to *Jesus Christ*, must evidently fail. I cannot forbear wondering, however, that any mortal could have ever discovered this doctrine in the benedictions of the apostle Paul. When he says, 1 Cor. 1, 3, *Grace be to you, and peace from God our Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ*, to whom can it be supposed he was addressing himself? Would it appear, at first view, that he intended to address himself to two different beings, in the very same breath? Would it appear, that after he made mention of *God the Father*, his thoughts could have been immediately called off to any other

object, as being, equally with the Father, the Fountain of all Good, or, as being, indeed, another Father? Or, did he not plainly, in this passage, intend to signify, that he addressed himself to God, beseeching him, that his grace and favour, originally flowing from his infinite fulness, and afterwards mercifully revealed to Christ, and communicated to him to be bestowed upon all nations, might rest upon the Corinthians? And, did he not also, in 2 Cor. 13, 14, evidently look up to the same glorious Jehovah, praying that the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, proceeding from the love of God, founded solely upon it, and always leading to it, together with the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, might ever continue with his converts? But you conclude, from his manner of expression, in these passages, that *his usual form of benediction was, by invocation of the name of Christ*; and you suppose the evidence decisive, that he has *invoked Christ*, in the *one*, and *Christ* and the *Holy Spirit*, in the *other*. You did not consider, Sir, that, if your remarks have proved any thing, they have proved too much. For, if the benedictions of Paul, declare that there are *three* persons in the Godhead, the benediction of John declares that there are *nine* persons in the Godhead, or, indeed, *ten* rather, since John does not expressly name the Holy Spirit, *whom* you would sooner suppose him to have forgotten, in his great confusion,

among

WORSHIP of CHRIST. 21

among such a multiplicity of objects, than not to have acknowledged, as *very God*. Paul says, *Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ*. And John says, Rev. 1, 4, 5, *Grace be unto you, and peace from Him who is, and who was, and who is to come, and from the seven spirits who are before his throne, and from Jesus Christ, &c.* If Paul, therefore, by the form of his benediction, invoked Jesus Christ as God; John, certainly, by the form of his benediction, has invoked the seven spirits, who were before the throne of God, as Gods; and, therefore, the most orthodox among us, are still strangers to seven Gods, or to seven persons in the Godhead, whom, according to your reasoning, they are divinely authorised to worship.

There is rather more the appearance of a petition having been preferred to Jesus Christ, 2 Thes. 2, 16, yet nothing more than an appearance. For God, even our Father, is here particularly distinguished from Jesus Christ; and the words, *who hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope, through grace*, are, according to the original, ascribed to God only. And, we know, that it was God, *who so loved the world as to give us his only begotten Son, that whoever believeth in him, might not perish, but have everlasting life*. It should seem manifest, then, that the apostle, in the above



passage, made his request to God, to God whom Jesus acknowledges to be *greater than all*, and to whom he ascribes, all that power which he possessed of *giving unto his sheep eternal life*: it should seem manifest, I say, that the apostle made his request to God, that he would comfort the hearts of the Thessalonians, by Jesus Christ, or, that they might receive abundant comfort from Christ, to whom God had communicated all spiritual blessings, to be bestowed upon those who should believe in his name. Besides, *Jesus Christ*, or, *our Lord Jesus Christ*, is frequently an abridged expression for *his Gospel*\*; and the passage in question will very well bear to be interpreted, as if the apostle had here prayed, that the gospel might administer to them consolation, peace, and joy, at all times, and that God, by the gospel, might *establish them in every good word and work*. Besides, again, people may, at any time, use a similar phraseology with that of the apostle, without being supposed to address any other Being than God. A person may pray, for instance, “may my enemies relent and pity me, may the advocates of truth and justice defend and suc-

*I think our  
Saviour says: Test.*

\* When it is said, *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever*, the words *Jesus Christ*, evidently mean the *Gospel of Jesus Christ*. This has been always the same. But, Jesus Christ could not have been always the same, could not have been the same, when living and when dead, when in his state of humiliation, and in his state of exaltation.

“cour me, and may God support and deliver me,” without meaning to *invoke* his enemies, or the advocates of truth and justice, or to render them *religious worship*.

In 2 Cor. 12, 8, God is evidently that *Lord*, whom the apostle *besought* thrice, even the *God of all grace*; who, accordingly, as we learn in the next verse, said unto him, *my grace is sufficient for thee*. Therefore, the apostle adds, *most gladly will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ*, that is, the divine influences of the christian religion, which is the grace of God, *may rest upon me*. He speaks of *visions and revelations of the Lord*, in the first verse. He says, in the second and third verses, that, at the time he had these visions and revelations, whether he was in the body, or out of the body, was known only to God. Which shews, that by *visions and revelations of the Lord*, he meant *visions and revelations of God*; and which, therefore, farther shews, that it was to God he prayed, *that the thorn in the flesh might depart from him*.

But there are two more passages of scripture, which must not be passed over in silence, as they afford, you think, such demonstrable evidences in favour of your doctrine, as cannot be resisted. These are 1 John 5, 13, 14, 15. and 3, 21, 22. and, so forcibly convincing do you apprehend them to be, that you seem willing to rest

your whole argument upon them. For you ask, in a triumphant manner, *Can a man read these two passages, and doubt for a single moment, whether his Saviour, you mean Jesus Christ, be the God that beareth prayer!* In the first passage, you acknowledge that God is represented as the hearer of prayer. For it is said, *If our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence towards God. And, whatever we ask, we receive of him, because we keep his commandments, &c.* And, in the other passage, it is not said, *This is the confidence we have in Christ*, but, *this is the confidence we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his will, he beareth us.* To what other Being; then, can the apostle have respect, in the words, *confidence in him*, but to the adorable God, whom he had before expressly mentioned, as the object of our adorations, and to whom he was all along leading our attention, as the Fountain of life and love, and the Author of all our blessings? If any man sin, he does not direct him, to apply for forgiveness to Jesus Christ; but teacheth us, that we have encouragement, in Christ, to apply for forgiveness to the Father. *If any man sin*, says he, *we have a Comforter with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, &c.\** And, he looks to God,

\* The word *παράκλητος* is found only in five passages of the New Testament, in the present, 1 John 2, 1. and in John 14, 16, 26.—15, 26.—16, 7. In the four passages of the Gospel, it is rendered *Comforter*. And, no reason can be



## WORSHIP of CHRIST. 25

throughout the whole epistle, as the sovereign source of all our mercies in Christ Jesus. It was written, *to shew unto us that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.* And, Behold, says he, *what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us---the Father first loved us---the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.* Again, *Love is of God---he loved us---God is love---God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.* We have, therefore, confidence in God, that if we ask any thing, &c.

Those, who insinuate that the personal substantive immediately preceding the relative, must be always considered as its antecedent, would prove from 2 John 7, that Jesus Christ is Antichrist. For, *This is a Deceiver and an Antichrist*, immediately follows the words, *Jesus Christ is come in the*

be assigned, why it should not also be rendered *Comforter* here. John is the only author who has introduced it at all. Is it not likely, therefore, that he always understood it in the same sense? But he professedly understood *Comforter* by it in four places out of five. Besides, when Jesus said, *I will pray the Father, and he will give you ANOTHER Comforter*, he expressly calls himself the Comforter of Christians. And, there is a dignity in the sentiment, *We have a Comforter with the Father.* The Holy Spirit, by which the Gospel was confirmed, comforted the Christians on earth. And, John tells them, that they had another Comforter in heaven, that *Jesus was their Comforter with the Father*; signifying, that as Jesus was with the Father, this was full evidence to them, that, if they followed his steps, they likewise, after death, should be with the Father.

*flesh.*

*flesh*. However, *God* is the immediately preceding word, to the passage, *and this is the confidence that we have in him*. But, I think, that the 12th and 13th verses should be read as in a parenthesis, and that the 7th, and the words *in earth*, in the 8th verse, because they are not John's, should be left out. Then would the whole context appear characteristic of its Author, as *bearing witness to the truth, and knowing that his testimony was true*\*.

Your criticism upon Acts 7, 59, and what you have said, concerning the worship, which was paid to Christ, according to the scriptures, and from which you infer his Deity, shall be the next consideration of,

Rev. Sir,

Your's, &c.

T H E O S E B E S.

\* See Emlyn's Tracts.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

REV. SIR,

**Y**OU think it deducible from Acts 7, 59, that *Stephen here worshipped Christ*, that he here worshipped Christ, *in the very same manner, in which, a little before, Christ himself had worshipped the Father*. But, I wonder, you did not observe, that, supposing this to be the case, it must have been very strange, if Stephen acted with propriety, that he should have offered the *very same worship* to the *worshipper of the Father*, which the *purest worshipper of the Father* offered to the *Father himself*. Mystery, you may reply, indeed, easily reconciles contradictions; and we should, for this reason, be most fond of a thing, because we discover a mystery in it\*. But this answer will not satisfy every person. Many may still think with me, that there is no evidence from the words of Stephen, that he intended a direct invocatory address to Jesus as God. He had, we know, both God and Christ in contemplation. *He saw, he says, the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God†*. And our

\* See Beveridge's private Thoughts.

† Stephen does not inform us, that he saw the very God, standing on the right hand of the very God.

transf-



translators seem to have been very right, in supplying the word *God* after the words, *calling upon*. For, if Luke had intended to instruct us, that, while the people stoned Stephen, he *called upon Jesus*, he would have written *ἐπικαλούμενον Κυρίον Ἰησοῦν καὶ λεγόντα, &c.* instead of what he has written *ἐπικαλούμενον καὶ λεγόντα, Κυρίε Ἰησοῦ, &c.* Stephen, therefore, *called upon God*, or *made his appeal to him*. Besides, you know very well, that the passage may be rendered *Lord of Jesus receive my spirit*, *Κυρίε Ἰησοῦ δέξαι, &c.* And when Stephen *saw the glory of God, and the Son of Man standing on the right hand of God*, what could be more natural to him, as the follower of Jesus, than to commit his departing spirit to the God of Jesus, and the God of the spirits of all flesh? Nay, I insist that this must be the genuine sense of the passage, to make it consistent with the other parts of scripture, if your explication of the common reading be unexceptionably just. But if Stephen actually said, *Lord Jesus receive my spirit*, there is still a wide difference between his address, and *Father, into thy hands, I commend my spirit*. There is the difference, that subsists, between *the Father*, who is the everlasting, independent, and unchangeable, Sovereign of the Universe, and the *Lord Jesus*, who received all his glory from the Father. Besides, Stephen, by calling Jesus *Lord*, which was to the glory of God the Father, cannot be rationally supposed to have given him the glory

glory of the Father. And, notwithstanding what you have asserted, every one, who calmly attends to the matter for a single moment, must perceive a manifest difference, between applying for refuge to a person whom we see with our eyes, and praying to the same person as God, when we see him not. We ask favours one of another in the language of supplication, when we are present one to another. But, we should be justly charged with idolatry, if we did the same thing, in one another's absence. Stephen, therefore, when he *saw* Christ, when he beheld him in possession of that kingdom for which he endured the cross, when he knew him to be the Mediator between God and man, and appointed to be the Guardian of all the people of God, might really say, *Lord Jesus receive my spirit*, without meaning to countenance the practice of other Christians, who have never seen Christ, of praying to him as God, without meaning any thing more indeed, than if he had said, indirectly addressing himself to the Father, " O God, I commit myself to his care, whom thou hast made the great Captain of my salvation, and to whom thou hast given power to preserve all, who come unto thee through him."

When Stephen, again, says, *Lord lay not this sin to their charge*, I suppose that he was addressing himself to God. But, granting the  
the

the contrary, he could only have addressed himself to Christ, because he was present with him, and even in these circumstances, only as that Being, *who had received power from God, to forgive sins.*

What has been said above, will fully apply to another passage, Rev. 22, 20, which you have not mentioned. *Even so, come Lord Jesus.* I shall, therefore, only observe upon this, that, John saw Jesus in vision, that Jesus said unto him, *Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me---and let him that is athirst come: and whoever will, let him take of the water of life freely, &c.* and that John's answer, therefore, is quite just and natural, and very different from our praying to Christ as God, without having any immediate communication with him.

Our way is now clear, I hope, for considering the scripture account of the worship which was paid to Christ. And it strikes me, at first view, that the scriptures never authorise us, to worship him as God; which, however, you should be able to prove, from the most indubitable facts, to establish your doctrine\*. Προσκυνω, you know, is indiscri-

\* You say, indeed, *Do not the Scriptures affirm, that Christ is to be worshipped, in consequence of his sufferings, and exaltation, and the power with which he was then invested?* And, you answer, *undoubtedly.* But no such scripture authorities, as you here refer to, are to be found. If they were, why did you not name them? Besides, when by *worship*, you mean *religious*



# WORSHIP of CHRIST. 31

minately used, to denote the homage that is paid from men to men, or from men to God. It literally describes that respect, submission, or reverence of any kind, which is rendered by an inferior to any superior. Of what kind, or nature, that respect, reverence, or submission is, can be determined only from the apprehended, or pretended, character of the person to whom it is offered, in the judgment of him who offers it. If God be the object of it, or if it be paid to men, under the professed belief that they are gods, then it is, strictly speaking, *religious*, or what we commonly understand, in our language, without this additional epithet, by the word *worship* \*. But, in any other view, the word *προσκύβω* never necessarily means *religious worship*. Besides, you

*religious worship*, and acknowledge that to be due only to the Omnipotent Creator, how can you speak of *worship*, as being divinely required to be offered up to any being, in consequence of his sufferings, and exaltation, and the power with which he was invested? You again say, p. 21, between the creature and its Creator, and the honour due respectively to each, must not the difference be ever infinite? But how does this appear, if the Creator may suffer, if the Creator may be exalted, and if the Creator may receive power from another?

\* *Worship*, however, does not always mean, even in our language, *religious worship*. In the marriage ceremony, for instance, a man is not understood to declare that he will render *religious worship* to his wife, when he says, *with my body I thee worship*. Neither do we consider magistrates, as the objects of *religious worship*, when we describe them as *worshipful*, or *their worships*. For, if we did, we should not only be chargeable with rendering religious worship to those, who, by nature, are no gods, but sometimes also with rendering religious worship to fools and knaves.

cannot

cannot produce a passage of scripture, where Christ is expressly said to have been worshipped as God. You cannot suppose that the *Eastern Magi* came up to Jerusalem to worship him as God. You cannot suppose that Herod intended to intimate to them, that he desired to worship him as God. You cannot suppose that they, when they saw him an infant, in the arms of his mother, really worshipped him as the Sovereign of heaven and earth. The *leper*, Mat. 8, 2, did not worship him as God, but as one who could heal him. The *ruler*, 9, 18, did not worship him as God, but as one who could restore his daughter. The disciples, 14, 33, did not worship him as God, but, according to their own confession, as the *Son of God*. The *woman of Canaan*, 15, 25, did not worship him as God, but as one who could help her. The *mother of Zebedee's children*, 18, 26, did not worship him as God, but as a prince of this world, requesting that he would make her sons his prime ministers. The disciples, 28, 9, 17, did not worship him as God. For, surely, they did not imagine, that God had been in the state of the dead, and that he had been raised from the dead. For, by whom then, must he have been raised? Again, the demoniac, called Legion, Mark 5, 6, did not worship Christ as God: for *he adjured him by God*. Those who crucified him, 15, 19, did not worship him as God, but insulted him with  
that

that mock worship, which was paid to the king of the Jews. See also Luke 24, 52. and John 9, 38. Now, as the original word, which in all the above passages, is rendered *worship*, signified no more than to pay reverence to Christ under a particular character, or to acknowledge him to be the Son of God, and that he possessed the gifts of healing, and of restoring the dead, what room was there to forbid persons to *worship* or *reverence* him, according to the character that belonged to him, that is, to forbid persons to acknowledge him to be possessed of that authority, with which he was evidently invested? But if those persons could have thought, that Jesus, whom they saw labouring under all the infirmities of mortality, was at the same time the omnipotent and impassible God; he himself sufficiently cautioned them against entertaining any such sentiments, by repeatedly assuring them, that he received all his power from the Father, and that he did not the works which they saw in him, but that the Father wrought all these works by him. But there seems to have been sufficient reason, to forbid Cornelius to worship Peter, and John to worship the Angel. The worship which Cornelius paid to Peter was such as is usually paid, by the humblest subjects to the most exalted monarchs, and, therefore, could not be accepted by Peter, from Cornelius, consistently with the command of Christ, that Peter should not become the



master of any man, or exercise any kind of authority over any man. And the same may be said of the worship which John offered to the angel. It was such, as should be rendered only to superiors. But, the angel was not superior to John. And he assigns this as a reason, why John should not worship him. *See, says he, thou do it not. I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren, that have the testimony of Jesus.* Rev. 19, 10. 22, 8. It is also to be observed, that Peter did not direct Cornelius to worship Christ, nor the angel direct John to worship Christ. On the contrary, the angel said to John, *worship God.* And, indeed, where any religious worship is expressly commanded in the New Testament, as well as in the Old, we are universally directed to God, as the only object of it. *Thou shalt worship no other God.* Exod. 34, 14. *If thou do at all forget the Lord thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day, that you shall surely perish.* See also Deut. 26, 10. 30, 17. 2 Kings 17, 36. 1 Chron. 16, 29. Psa. 81, 9. 95, 6. 99, 5. &c. &c. Jesus also says, *Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve.* Mat. 4, 10. *The true worshippers shall worship the Father.* John 4, 23. See also 1 Cor. 14, 25. Rev. 7, 11. 11, 16. 14, 7. 19, 4. &c.

It is also to be observed, that, in the prophecies relating to the kingdom of Christ,  
where

## W O R S H I P of C H R I S T. 35

where the worship of the subjects of this kingdom is described, God is pointed out as the object of it. *All the ends of the world shall remember, and turn unto the Lord; and all the kindreds of the nations shall worship before thee.* Ps. 22, 27.\*

I think, now, that all those difficulties will vanish, which have been started concerning that passage in Heb. 1, 6. *And let all the angels of God worship him.* Whatever this worship be, it is God who commandeth it. And God commandeth that it should be given to another. But God, surely, could not command, that *religious worship* should be given to any other than himself†. If, therefore, by the *angels* here, we are to understand *the angels of heaven*, nothing more could have been intended, according to the clear doctrine of scripture already delivered, than that the angels of heaven were inferior in dignity to Jesus, and that they should be subject to him. We cannot suppose, however, that the author of this epistle

\* *I Will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the ends of the earth. Thus saith the Lord, the Redeemer of Israel, his Holy One, to him whom man despiseth, to him whom the nation abhorreth, to a servant of rulers; Kings shall see, and arise; princes also shall worship; because of the Lord that is faithful, the Holy One of Israel, and he shall choose thee.* Isa. 49, 6, 7. *The Lord will be terrible unto them: for he will famish all the gods of the earth; and men shall worship him, every one from his place, even all the idols of the heathen.* Zeph. 2, 11.

† For, my glory, says he, *I will not give unto another.*

could have intended to ask us, what God had said to the angels of heaven? But we may well suppose him to have put the question, what had God said to the angels on earth, or to all those men, whom he had appointed to be the messengers of his will to men? The original word, which is translated *angel*, means nothing more in itself than *messenger*. And whether such messenger be some superior spiritual being, or only a man, is to be determined by the character he bears in other respects. The word *angels* here, then, might refer, according to Ps. 97, 7, to earthly magistrates, who are called gods. And, then, the sense of the passage should be, that Jesus was Greater than them all, and that they should all yield subjection to his divinely established dominion over them. But, the apostle should rather seem to have had in his eye, the prophets of God, who had gone before Christ. He draws a parallel between them and Christ, in the first and second verses. *God, who, at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in time past unto the fathers, by the prophets, bath in these last days, spoken unto us by his Son.* And it was very natural, in writing to the Jews, to shew that Jesus was superior to all their prophets, as God had more highly distinguished him. God raised none of the prophets from the dead. He said to none of them, *Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee.* He said to none of them, let the *others* be subject to *him*.



*him. But, when he bringeth in the first begotten into the world, he saith, and let all the angels, the messengers, of God worship him, that is, " Let all the other prophets give way to him, and acknowledge their inferiority; " and let him be revered, as the most " perfect and enlightened teacher that God " ever sent into the world."*

But, you are positive, Sir, that in the above passage, the *very same* worship is commanded to be paid to Christ, by all the angels of heaven, that they harmoniously offered up to the God of Christ. And, you think, that this is fully exemplified, in Rev. 5, 12, 13; where, you say, *All the angelic intelligences are represented as ascribing the VERY SAME blessing, &c. to God and Christ in conjunction.* But, if you look again into your Bible, you will find that you have made an addition to the text. For though *blessing, and honour, and glory, and power be ascribed unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb,* it is not said that the *very same* ascriptions of praise belong to one, as to the other, or were offered to *both in conjunction.* Paul says, *It pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell, and that every tongue shall confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.* But, a derived and dependent glory, can never be *the very same* with original and self-existent glory: nor can that glory, which ultimately terminates in the

Father, or which is given to Christ to the glory of the Father, be ever considered as upon an equality with that glory, which is given to the Father himself, as supreme over all, and as centering solely in him, without passing to any other Being in the universe. Besides, when we describe different beings, in the same scale of existence, under the very same character, we do not mean to affirm, that that description, which we mention, as common to them all, is equally applicable to them all. Much less can this be our meaning, when we thus speak of different orders of beings. When we call men and angels *holy*, we do not mean that they are *equally* so. Much less still can it be imagined, that, when the great God is spoken of in the same language with inferior beings, that inferior beings are therefore intended to be described as upon a level with God. Though we call men *wise*, and *good*, and *holy*, we mean, notwithstanding, that *wisdom*, and *goodness*, and *holiness*, considered as absolute perfections, or independent, inherent possessions, belong only to God; and we, therefore, say, with Jesus, *There is none good but God*, with Paul, *God only is wise*, and with John, *God only is holy*. And, in all cases, indeed, we should be taught to understand the same description of different beings, and the same ascriptions of praise applied to them, either literally or figuratively, according to the proper character of each of these beings, and the un-

question-

questionable perfections which otherwise severally belong to them. We give glory and honour and blessing to men, without meaning to consider them as any thing more than men. In like manner, we call Jesus *Lord*, but, we mean the *anointed Lord*, who is at the same time subject to the One Lord over all beings, even the Father, and whose lordship, therefore, is perpetually dependent on *his* will and pleasure, because he received it from the *Father*. We again, call Jesus our *Saviour*, but we mean the deputed and appointed Saviour, because God is the absolute Saviour of all men, and *it is the Father who saveth us by Jesus Christ*. When we ascribe, therefore, *blessing, and glory, and honour, and power* to Christ, we should only be understood to acquiesce, and rejoice, in that *blessing, and glory, and honour, and power* which he received from the Father, and to pray for the universal progress and continuance of his kingdom. This is John's meaning, when he says, Rev. 1, 5, 6, *Unto him, who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, that is, redeemed us by his death and resurrection from the dead, and hath made us kings and priests unto GOD AND HIS FATHER; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.* But, when we ascribe *blessing, and glory, and honour, and power* unto him that sitteth on the throne, we look up to God, as supreme over all, we adore *him* as the absolutely peerless and indefectible



source of all wisdom, and power, and goodness, we rejoice in his everlasting, universal, unchangeable, and uncontrollable dominion, and express our submission to all his dispensations. And when we use the above language, concerning both the Father and the Son, at the same time, we should mean no more than to rejoice in these declarations of Christ, *he that overcometh and keepeth my works unto the end, to him will I give power over the nations---even as I have received of my Father. For, as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For as the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself; and hath given him an authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man.* In short, all religious homage, adoration, and praise, or all our services, as creatures, belong only unto God. Let it ever, therefore, be the devout and elevated language of all created intelligences, *Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen* \*.

But, to hasten to a conclusion of this part of the subject, I must observe, Sir, con-

\* It is also worthy of notice, that *Σεβω*, or *Σεβουμαι*, which, I believe, always imply, *religious worship*, either true or false, is never applied to Christ in the New Testament. Neither is *λατρευω*, because it more generally signifies, *religious worship*, though not without some exceptions.

cerning

# WORSHIP of CHRIST. 41

cerning John 5, 13. as I did concerning Rev. 5, 13. that you have added to the text. For you represent it, as if it was said, *In heaven all honour the Son even as they honour the Father.* But the text is, *that all men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father.* And, "these words," as a modern writer says, "cannot possibly convey so absurd and impious an idea, as that we should consider the Son upon an equality with the Father, or even that the Son should become as high an object of our adoration. The word *καθως* never signifies *æqualiter*, *equally*, but, *quum sicut*, *inasmuch as*; and the only rational construction that can be put upon this celebrated passage, is, *that all men should honour the Son, if they really do honour the Father, or, if they would shew that they really honour the Father*; and thus our Lord fully explained it in the following words, when he says, *He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father who hath sent him.* As if he had said, by affirming, that *all men should honour the Son, &c.* I mean, *that he that honoureth not the Son, &c.* As he said at another time; *he that despiseth him, despiseth not him, but him that sent him.* It was really the Father, who was dishonoured, when no regard was paid to the declarations of the Son. He acted under the authority of the Father; and he vindicated, not his own authority (he claimed

"ed

"ed no authority of his own) but the au-  
 "thority of the Father. *I can of my own*  
 "*self*, says he, in this very chapter, *do no-*  
 "*thing: as I hear, I judge---I seek not my own*  
 "*will but the will of the Father who hath sent*  
 "*me. If I bear witness of myself, my witness*  
 "*is not true, &c.* How astonishing, then,  
 "that men can represent our Lord, as con-  
 "tradictorily claiming, in the same breath,  
 "what he had so repeatedly disavowed and  
 "rejected, namely those divine honours,  
 "which belong to the Father only, or as  
 "touching us, that we should make no  
 "distinction between *him* who did nothing  
 "of himself, and *him* who did all things by  
 "him, and can do all things of himself, and  
 "that we should render the same personal  
 "homage to the *messenger* of God, whose  
 "whole dependence was upon God, as to  
 "the *unchangeable and everlasting God him-*  
 "*self!*" See *Human Authority in Matters of*  
*Faith, repugnant to Christianity*, p. 19, 20.

But, Sir, not satisfied with attempting  
 to establish the doctrine of two Gods, when  
 you have completely done this, as you think,  
 you then introduce us to a third. "Equal  
 "honour," you say, "should be paid to  
 "both Father and Son with the Holy Spi-  
 "rit." And this you infer, from *the bap-*  
*tismal form running in the name of all three.*  
 These three, you farther tell us, *are not pro-*  
*properties; they are persons certainly.* And, you  
 again



again affirm, that, *whether St. John has said it or not, if there be any meaning in words,* THESE THREE ARE ONE. You, surely, must be an adept in hitting off the meaning of words. Words can have no meaning, if *Three* has a different meaning from *One*! A *Both*, and a *One* added to this *Both*, do altogether make only *One*---one individual being, three times one person indeed, first, second, third, in order, and yet all not beyond the number *One*! No matter what John wrote, or thought about it. Can any thing in the world be more plain? But, *these Three* must be *One*, you think, because we are baptised into the name of the three; and you would not be baptised into the name of a creature. You know, however, that the Jews were baptised into Moses, and why would you not be subject to a creature, to the glory of the Creator? The gospel is the doctrine of repentance towards God; and as Jesus, in the gospel, is the way to the Father, and as the mission of Jesus, and the truth of the gospel, have been confirmed by the Holy Spirit, what absurdity can there be, in being baptised in the name of Jesus, and the Holy Spirit, though neither of these was God? Or, what tendency can this have to mislead us from the Father, or to make us glorify the creature as the Creator? On the contrary, it is, by the gospel, considered as the revelation of Jesus, and as confirmed by the infallible testimony

testimony of the Holy Spirit, that we are most powerfully drawn to the Father and eternal life\*.

I would observe, once more, that the personality of the Holy Spirit, is not to be determined, by saying, *certainly it is so*. We have had something more than affirmations, we have had many cogent arguments, to prove the contrary. But, I think, that no other arguments are necessary to this purpose, besides those with which Luke has furnished us, in his description of the Holy Spirit, when given to the apostles. Let any one impartially, and without prejudice, read this description, and then judge for himself."†

I have now finished my observations upon what you call your *Scripture Evidence*. I shall therefore proceed in my next letter, to consider your extracts from the fathers, &c.

In the mean time you will allow me to subscribe myself,

Your friend and humble servant,

THE O S E B E S.

\* "Jesus having been invested with sovereign power after his resurrection, he then commanded his disciples, to baptize in the name of the Father, &c. that is, with the fullest possible divine authority—that is, of the Father, who had given all power to the Son, and also confirmed his divine mission by miracles" See *The open Address of New Testament Evidence*, p. 28, 34.

† See the next letter, p. 61, 62.

LETTER

LETTER V.

REV. SIR,

I HAVE neither time nor inclination, at present, to enter into a particular examination of all the sentiments of the fathers, as they are called, upon the doctrine under consideration. I remember enough of them, to know, that there are fathers against fathers, and the same father against himself, upon almost all doctrines. I know, besides, that the sentiments of the most venerable of the fathers, or of all the fathers put together, are no rule of faith to Christians. The Bible is our religion. And all the authorities that you can quote, except the Bible, shall have no more weight with me than an Italian bull.

I must observe, however, that you have not refuted Mr. Lindsey's assertion, that *all christian people, for upwards of 300 years after Christ, till the council of Nice, were generally Unitarians*. If authority may be poised against authority, lord chancellor King is against you. The fathers themselves are against you. And bishop Bull, who embraced your own sentiments, is against you. For, he says, that *in the first and best ages,*  
*the*



*the churches of Christ directed all their prayers, according to the scripture, to God only---and that in the Clementine Liturgy, which contained the order of worship before the time of Constantine, all prayers are directed to the Father. See Lindsey, 148.*

I would also observe, that most of those testimonies which you have produced from the fathers, are far from being positively in your favour. Polycarp, in his benediction which you have quoted, p. 10, *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, &c.* positively distinguisheth between God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ, calls Jesus Christ the Son of the Father, whom the Father raised from the dead. Again, in his doxology, which you have quoted, p. 11, and which, you say, *he concluded to the whole Trinity*, we find no such terms as *the whole Trinity*. *I bless thee, I praise thee, I glorify thee for all things, together with the eternal and heavenly Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son, with whom unto thee, and the Holy Spirit, be glory, &c.* So prayed, you say, *this holy bishop*. And upon the sole foundation of this prayer, you say, *we find him in the possession of the doctrine of a coequal and coeternal Trinity*. What he meant by *eternal*, when applied to Jesus Christ, I do not know\*. But, I think it evident,

\* He possibly might have meant no more, than that he was a priest for ever, after the order of Melchisedec.

that,

that, by calling Jesus Christ, the beloved *Son of God*, he denied him to be *coequal*, or *coeternal* with him. However, if this holy bishop whispered in your ear, that he professed the same doctrine which you profess, he might have been *ignorant of the proper object of christian worship* as much as many others, who lived before him, and were taught by the apostles as well as he. And if he did not derive this doctrine from the *Platonists*, I wish to be informed from what other quarter he borrowed it\*.

Ignatius does not say what you make him say, in your translation, *I glorify Jesus our God*, but *I glorify Jesus the God*†. He might have meant, by *the God*, no more than the *appointed Governor*. But let him have meant what he would, he might be mistaken, as much as those Antichrists; of whom John spake, in his time.

\* You again understand Polycarp, p. 27, as pronouncing *the refusal of religious adoration to Jesus Christ*, to be equivalent with *blaspheming his King and his Saviour*. But Polycarp has not authorised you to affix this meaning to his words. There can be no connexion, indeed, between the one idea and the other. By *blaspheming Christ*, Polycarp understood, *denying and renouncing him*. And, whatever were his sentiments, in other respects, he had more charity, I hope, than to call any persons *blasphemers*, who professed subjection to the authority of Christ, though they did not believe exactly as he did.

† *Ἰσοῦ τοῦ Θεοῦ.*

Neither

Neither does Justin Martyr mention *the whole Trinity*, nor any such word as the *Trinity*, as the *object of christian worship*. There is, certainly, great confusion in his language, when he says, "We worship and adore the God of righteousness, and his Son, and the Holy Spirit of prophecy." Yet, that he did not here mean to say, that the Christians worshipped and adored the Son of the God of righteousness, and the Holy Spirit of prophecy, is evident from his declaration to the emperors---"We hold it unlawful to worship any but God alone." He could not, surely, mean to say, if he was in his right mind, that the *God of righteousness* was not *God alone*, or that either *the Son of the God of righteousness*, or *the Holy Spirit of prophecy*, was *God alone*. We may suppose, therefore, that Martyr either expressed himself in an unguarded manner, but that he fully explained himself to the emperors, or that some of his negligent transcribers might have dropt one of his words, and that he might have originally written, "We worship and adore the God of righteousness, and we believe in his Son, and the Holy Spirit of prophecy."

Origen's testimony, p. 15. if it proves any thing, shews that he believed both the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost,  
to



to be creatures \*. However, he also, might have been injured by his transcribers.

But you refute yourself, I think, when you say, that "the Christians objected to the Pagans their idolatry, that the Pagans retorted the objection on the Christians as the worshippers of a crucified man, and that the Christians did not deny the charge, but acknowledged it universally." For the Christians, according to your own account, defended themselves, by saying, *we worship God alone*. But the Christians, surely, believed that Jesus Christ had been a crucified man. They denied, therefore, that they worshipped him, when they affirmed, that they worshipped God alone, or the only God, ΘΕΟΥ ΜΑΡ ΜΑΟΥΟΥ.

But, though you would have your readers conclude, that you deem the above quotations from the fathers *to be absolutely unanswerable*, you seem conscious, notwithstanding, that there are some almost insurmountable difficulties remaining. You are forced to confess, that the Son was *begotten* of the Father, and that the Spirit *proceeded* from both. But to the objections arising from these unquestionable facts, you only reply,

\* This is the most obvious meaning of the words, "We worship and adore no creature, but the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost." Addison, therefore, justly condemns Milton, for using a similar kind of expression.

“ No matter *how* the Son was begotten of  
 “ the Father, or *how* the Spirit proceeds from  
 “ both.” Seriously, Sir, can you think  
 this reasoning? The question is not, *how*  
 the Son was begotten, or *how* the Spirit pro-  
 ceeded from both; but whether or not, the  
 Son *was* begotten, and the Spirit *proceeded*  
 from both the Father and the Son. If the  
 Son *was* begotten, he *was not* the Being who  
 begot him, and if the Spirit proceeded from  
 both, he could neither be the one, nor the  
 other, of those from whom he proceeded. I  
 fear, therefore, that, unless the *everlasting*  
*hills* be fixed more firmly than your premises  
 and conclusion, they will speedily shake  
 under our feet.

As I have been so particular, all along,  
 in replying to every argument, which you  
 urged in the defence of your cause, I will  
 take some notice of your testimonies from  
 Pliny and Lucian. Pliny, indeed, hardly  
 gives you any support at all. He only re-  
 ports, that, according to the confession,  
 which he took down from the Christians,  
 “ their custom was to meet on a certain day,  
 “ before it was light, and among other parts  
 “ of their worship, sing an hymn to Christ,  
 “ as to *their* God--*carmenque Christo, quasi Deo,*  
 “ *dicere secum in vicem.*” We are not to sup-  
 pose, that Pliny was so exact as to take their  
 confession word for word as they delivered  
 it, or that he was solicitous to do any thing  
 more than record what he apprehended to  
 be

be the sense of it. They might not have used the word *Deo*, but *Salvatori*, or some other word. The hymn, which they sung, might have been what we have already considered from Rev. 5, 13. However, the word *quasi* shews, that they did not sing an hymn to Christ, *as being really God*, but *as if he were a God*, or one invested with divine power.

Lucian, however, speaks to the point. But Lucian's design was, you know, to ridicule Christianity. And he had wit enough to represent the Christians' mention of *the great, immortal, heavenly God, and the Son of the Father, and the Spirit proceeding from the Father*, as if they had professed to believe in a sort of compound Being, denominated *One in Three, and Three in One*. And this ridicule of his might possibly have given the hint, to those who had not half his invention to start the doctrine of the Trinity at first. Besides, we are sure, that one part of his account is not true, in which he makes the Christians call their God, *Jupiter*, a name that they abhorred. We may, therefore, well question his veracity, in the other parts of it. But, *the manner, you say, in which this testimony affected Socinus, well deserves our notice*. It well deserves our notice, then, it seems, that Socinus should have said, he never met, in the course of his reading, any greater evidence of the belief and worship of a Triune God,



God, having taken place among Christians, towards the close of the second century, than in the dialogue of Lucian, styled *Philopatris*. What less was this than saying, that there was no evidence for any such doctrine in the scriptures, nor even in any of the christian writers before Lucian; or, that he had not such great proofs of their belief of such doctrine from the Christians themselves, as from their enemy Lucian? However, these proofs, did not so far affect him, as to make him believe even in a twofold God, or, in any respect, to relinquish the grand doctrine of the Unity\*.

You, again, triumph over Socinus, by remarking, that he was confounded and silenced, when vindicating the worship of Christ, by one of his own disciples. But, this matter of triumph only shews us, that Socinus was fallible, and that his disciple, upon one particular, saw farther, and reasoned more justly than he did. Before we exult much, however, in detecting a mistake of so great a man, we should be able to name some other man, all things considered, whose mistakes have been so few,

\* You would not, surely, take your ideas of Christianity from the representations of some of our modern Deists. But, they are as good commentators, and to the full as candid, as Lucian. We must, indeed, be driven to the most wretched shifts, when we have no other support, for what we proclaim a doctrine of the Gospel, than the testimonies of either the one or the other.

or who has done so much, in an age of darkness, towards clearly unfolding to us the doctrines of scripture.

But, whatever Socinus has said, or however he was affected upon any particular occasion, is not the point to be considered. Neither are the records of Lucian, nor of Pliny; neither are the opinions of the Origenes, the Jeromes, the Polycarps, and of all the other fathers so much as the dust of the balance, in determining the question in debate between us. My appeal is, to *the faith, which was once delivered to the saints*, to that charter of heaven graciously communicated to man, to decisively ascertain the peerless perfections of the One Jehovah, and that pure homage which we indispensably owe unto him.

But, here, he that runs, may read, that there is only One eternal Deity, One only supreme, self-existent, and uncontrollable Governor of the universe. "Hear, O Israel," says Moses, Deut. 6, 4. "the Lord our God "is one Lord." Again, 4, 35, 39. "The "Lord, *the Jehovah*, he is God, *the alone* "God, there is none else beside him---he is "God in heaven above, and upon the earth "there is none else." Again, 32, 39. "I, "even I am He, and there is no God WITH "ME---neither is there any, who can deliver "out of my hand." Again, Isaiah 37, 16.

" O Lord of hosts, God of Israel---thou art  
 " the God, even thou alone of all the king-  
 " doms of the earth." Again, 44, 6. " Thus  
 " saith the Lord, the King of Israel, and his  
 " Redeemer, the Lord of Hosts, I am the  
 " first, and I am the last, and besides me,  
 " there is no God. I am God, and there is  
 " none else," 22. " Is there a God beside?  
 " Yea, there is no God, I know not any,"  
 " 44, 8. &c. &c. &c. Such is also the sub-  
 lime and enlightened language of David. *The*  
*Lord reigneth*, in many passages. " Thou  
 " art great, O Lord God ; for there is none  
 " like thee, neither is there any God beside  
 " thee." 2 Sam. 7, 22. Thus also Solomon,  
 " 1 Kings 8, 27. " Will God, indeed, dwell  
 " on the earth ! behold the heaven, and the  
 " heaven of heavens cannot contain thee."  
 And thus all the prophets universally. The  
 same is likewise the doctrine of our Lord  
 Jesus Christ. " There is none good, but  
 " One, that is God. And this is life eter-  
 " nal, to know Thee, the only true God."  
 Paul, also, and all the other apostles, har-  
 moniously affirm, that there is none other  
 God but One, the King eternal, the immor-  
 tal, and invisible, and the only wise God.  
 and hence it follows, that no other Being  
 whatever, in the universe, can have any  
 power over any of the creatures he has made,  
 without his permission and concurrence.  
 Thus the Psalmist teacheth, Ps. 136, 1, 2,  
 3, 4. " O give thanks unto the Lord---O give  
 " thanks



# W O R S H I P *of* C H R I S T. 5 5

“ thanks unto the God of Gods---O give  
 “ thanks unto the Lord of Lords---to him,  
 “ who alone doeth great wonders: for his  
 “ mercy endureth for ever.” Thus also Isa.  
 44, 24. “ I am the Lord, who maketh all  
 “ things, who stretcheth forth the heavens  
 “ alone, who spreadeth abroad the earth by  
 “ myself.” And, not to multiply passages to  
 the same purpose, such is likewise the lan-  
 guage of Jesus Christ; who says, that “ He  
 “ maketh his Sun to rise on the evil and on  
 “ the good, and sendeth rain on the just and  
 “ unjust---that the hairs of our heads are  
 “ numbered with him, and that not even a  
 “ sparrow can fall to the ground without  
 “ his leave.” Therefore, the One only God,  
 is not only the supreme and independent  
 Sovereign of the universe, exclusive of all  
 others, the high and lofty One, who inha-  
 biteth eternity, but also the immediate om-  
 nipotent, unceasing support of his immense  
 creation, the Ruler of all other rulers, the  
 Governor of all other governors, who will  
 never give his glory to any other being, and  
 whose alone wisdom and justice will ever  
 protect and defend his faithful servants, in  
 their dutiful subjection to him. He is the  
 hearer of prayer. He is the One only very  
 God. He is, therefore, the only object of all  
 religious homage, adoration, and praise.

But, it is not more absolutely irrational  
 and absurd, to affirm that all Christians,  
 compose only one individual being, than to

affirm, that the One God, the One only everlasting, peerless Jehovah, consisteth of three persons, according to the first article of the Church of England, or of four persons, according to the second article of that church; I say of four persons, according to the second article of that church, for *two whole and perfect natures* must ever constitute two distinct persons. The scriptures are not, in the least, equivocal upon this subject. They are clear and decisive in declaring the One God, to be one person, or one being, and that this being is the Father of all. Paul says, *There is but One God, the Father*, 1 Cor. 8, 4, 5. whom he calls, Col. 1, 3. *The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*. To the same purpose, see Gal. 1, 3, 4. Eph. 5, 20. Phil. 2, 11. 1 Thes. 1, 1. 2 Thes. 2, 16. Ja. 1, 27. &c. &c. &c. But our Lord Jesus Christ, likewise, when solemnly addressing himself to the Father, ascribes to him the incommunicable prerogative of being the only true God. *This*, says he, *is life eternal, to know Thee the only true God*. And, instead of claiming Godhead to himself, he declares himself to be only *the sent of God*, or *his ambassador*. If, therefore, Jesus Christ prayed to the only true God, and if the only true God, to whom he prayed, was the Father, neither Jesus Christ, therefore, nor the Holy Spirit, is the only true God.

But

# WORSHIP of CHRIST. 57

But you insinuate, that Jesus Christ is God, because, *at his birth, God was manifest in the flesh.* p. 22. You might as well have argued, however, that the heavens are God, because God is manifest in the heavens.

You again affirm that Jesus Christ is God, because Paul, you say, Rom. 9, 5. styles him, *God over all blessed for ever.* But, you know, that this passage will bear to be differently rendered. The apostle had said before, *Who are Israelites, to whom pertaineth or, whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came.* What more natural conclusion could he have made to this passage, than, *Whose is the God over all blessed for ever.* But we may also point the passage differently, put a period after *παιτων*; and then the proper reading of it will be, according to the original, *Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all. God is blessed for ever.* Or, *Blessed be God for ever.* Take which of these readings you please. One of them you must prefer to our common translation, to make Paul consistent with himself. For, while Paul believed, that the Father was the head of Christ, and the God and Father of Christ, he could not have written, that *Christ is God over all*, unless he  
only



only meant by this, that *Christ was appointed by God, to be head over all things for the good of his church\**.

But you likewise decisively maintain, that Thomas called Jesus, his Lord and his God. And, fully to establish this point, you think it sufficient to print in Italics the words, "unto him." *Thomas, you say, answered and said UNTO HIM, my Lord and my God.* To whom else, indeed, was he ever supposed to have spoken the words? But, how is it clear, therefore, that he meant to call Jesus his Lord and his God? Upon the discovery of some wonderful event, which previously appeared to me altogether incredible, I may say, *unto you*, "My Lord and my God," without being understood to consider you, as either one, or the other. And why should we not interpret, in the same manner, the address of Thomas to Jesus? Thomas, surely was not very credulous. Nothing less than ocular demonstration could convince him that Jesus was risen. Can we imagine, then,

\* Paul also says, 1 Cor. 15, 28, "when all things shall be subdu'd unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him, that put all things under him, that God may be all in all." Paul, therefore, declared here, as in other places, that Christ is not *very God*. For, How should the *very God* be subject to himself? Or, How should the very God receive the kingdom from himself, and again deliver up the kingdom to himself? I cannot help thinking, that your time might be employed to good purpose, if you would reconsider the *unhappily misguided* Lindsey's Apology, the Letter on the Logos written in the year 1730, Cardale's True Doctrine, nay, even Doctor Priestley's penny pamphlets, &c.

that

that upon seeing that Jesus was really risen, he, who could before believe nothing, should immediately believe that Jesus was Almighty God? Was the resurrection from the dead, a proof of divinity in the person raised? Was it not rather a proof that Deity properly belonged to the Being who raised him? And is it not more natural to suppose that Thomas, filled with the utmost admiration and surprise at the power of God, in the resurrection of Jesus, should have looked up to God, as that adoreable Being with whom nothing is impossible, when he said, by way of exclamation, to Jesus, *My Lord, and my God*, than that he should have considered Jesus as his Lord and his God, and consequently have believed, first, that his God had been in the state of the dead, and, secondly, that the dead raised himself?

But, once more, you assert, that *Christ was God before he was man*, p. 22. And you endeavour to support this assertion, by saying, *that he existed in the form of God, before he existed in the likeness of man*. But the scriptures only say, *Who being in the form of God---took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men*. The scriptures do not say, that he was not in the form of God, and in the form of a servant, at the same time. The scriptures rather suppose this. And it is every way agreeable to the context, to conclude that the apostle had no  
reference

reference to different times, but to the same time. "Who being in the form of God," having authority from him, "yet humbled himself to the state of a servant, or condition of a slave\*."

Besides, the scriptures, instead of informing us, that the Son is very God, or that Jesus Christ is coequal, or coeternal with the Father, expressly teach the contrary doctrine. They most explicitly declare, that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world, that the Son proceeded from the Father, did nothing of himself, came not to do his own will but the will of the Father, and frequently addressed himself in prayer to the Father. Indeed, you yourself acknowledge, Sir, p. 24, that there are some texts which *intimate* disparity and inferiority, which speak of *sending* and *being sent*, and the like. But how is it supposable, that the Spirit of Truth could ever intimate *inferiority* or *disparity*, if there was no room for such distinctions, or should speak of sending and of being sent, if no such things could possibly happen. But the Spirit of Truth says, farther, that the Son was the seed of the woman, the root of Jesse, the servant of the Lord of hosts, the messenger of the covenant, a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and a prophet like unto Moses, whom the Lord God should

\* See some papers in the Theological Repository, on the Form of God, &c. Vol. 2. p. 141. 219.



## WORSHIP of CHRIST. 61

raise up unto the Jews. The Son is again called, a man approved of God, by wonders, and signs, and miracles, which God did by him: and in consequence of his humility and obedience to the Father, we are, farther, informed, that God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name that is above every name, and hath appointed him to be the judge of quick and dead. And, agreeably to the above description, we also learn, that Jesus was an infant, that he grew in wisdom and stature, and that he was made like unto his brethren in all things, sin only excepted. Nay, under the exalted character of Mediator, he is described as *man*. There is One *Mediator*, between God and man, the *man* Christ Jesus. And, indeed, the idea of Mediator manifestly excludes the supposition of his having been God; *since*, as you say, *a Mediator must communicate with both parties*. But, if the Mediator be God, there is only one party left, with whom to communicate\*.

Again, if we attend to the scripture account of the *Holy Spirit*, we do not meet with the most distant intimation, that this was God, but the marvellous effects of the various displays of his power. The *Holy*

\* “The worshippers of Christ,” you say, p. 22, are “charged with idolatry. If he be a mere man, or, indeed, “if he be a creature, there is foundation for the charge.” I wish you to review this passage, and compare what you here assert with the scripture evidence.

*Spirit,*

*Spirit*, with which Jesus was baptised, was the power of working miracles, of discerning the hearts, and of foreknowing future events. Miracles were the *Holy Spirit* by which the gospel was established. And the *Holy Spirit*, which was promised to the apostles, and which they received on the day of Pentecost, was the gift of languages, and the spirit of prophecy, &c. *They were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance.* And it is manifest, from the whole scripture history, that the *Holy Spirit* signifies some supernatural gift or endowment, of one kind or other, bestowed by God upon particular persons, for the edification of his church\*.

Suffer me now, then, Sir, to address you, in your own words, p. 20, 21. *If we are to worship only the Lord our God---and if St. Paul blamed the heathen, because they gave divine worship to those  $\mu\eta\phi\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\iota\ \epsilon\varsigma\ \Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$  †, shall we be blameless, when we worship Christ, unless he be  $\phi\upsilon\sigma\iota\varsigma\ \Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ ?*

\* Our Lord said to the apostles, John 15, 13, "When He the Spirit of Truth," by the *Spirit of Truth*, you will admit, was meant the *Holy Spirit*, "is come, he will guide you into all truth." But the apostles never intimate, that the *Spirit of Truth* taught them that the Holy Spirit is God, or that God is a Trinity of Persons. Yet, if this doctrine be the doctrine of truth, it was the indispensable office of the Spirit of truth, to have instructed the apostles in it, and that in the most unequivocal and express terms.

\*  $\mu\eta\ \phi\upsilon\sigma\epsilon\iota\ \epsilon\varsigma\ \Theta\epsilon\acute{o}\varsigma$ , is, *who by nature are not Gods.*

Suffer

## W O R S H I P *of* C H R I S T. 63

Suffer me, again, as a conclusion of the whole, to lay before you the apostle John's description of those Antichrists who were to arise in the church.

First, he does not call him Antichrist, who does not adore Jesus Christ as very God, or who does not believe, that he is coequal and coeternal with the Father. But *Who is a liar*, says he, *but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ?* But when we assert, that Jesus is the supreme God, we deny that he is the Christ. For *the Christ* signifies the *anointed One*, or one chosen and exalted to dominion by another. If Jesus, therefore, was the Supreme God, there could have been no being, to anoint, or send, or exalt him. Besides, to call the same being both God himself, and the Christ of God, is a palpable contradiction; for the Christ of God, must ever mean a different being, from God himself, and one inferior to him.

Secondly, this apostle calls those Antichrists, *who deny both the Father and the Son*. But, when we say, that the One God consists of Three persons, each of which is to be considered as the One God, we deny that the One God is the One God, we, therefore, deny the Father. And when we call the Son the One God, we also deny the Son; for the one God cannot be a Son, nor have any Father. The doctrine of the Trinity,  
there-



therefore, is clearly a denial both of the Father and the Son.

Thirdly, this apostle calls those Antichrists, *who denied or confessed not, that Jesus Christ is come into the flesh.* But to *come in the flesh*, signifies to be involved in all the infirmities, sufferings, and changes of human nature. And this, again, implies that the being, so circumstanced, must have been a man. When we assert, therefore, that Jesus is the Supreme God, we deny him to be the Christ, we deny him to be the Son of God, and we deny that he is come in the flesh.

Thus, Sir, have I freely communicated to you my sentiments, upon a most important doctrine; which you will not, I hope, *reject with scorn*, but examine with the candour and impartiality of a man.

But, though we should still continue to differ, I will not charge you with *impious perverseness*, or with *impious ingratitude*.

I aim at nothing but Truth. And that we may know the truth, and that the truth may make us free, shall ever be the devout wish of,

Rev. Sir, your humble servant, &c.

THEO SEBES.

F I N I S.